

grateful to the APSA for the privilege of working with one of the program's most talented fellows this year, Dr. Frances Lee of Case Western Reserve University.

Frances has been a true delight and an invaluable asset to my office. Both my staff and I feel honored to have had a chance to benefit from her many-faceted intelligence, her unstinting hard work, and her ever-cheerful demeanor. In her short time with us, she has worked on several projects of both local and national impact that are of special importance to my constituents back in the Fifth District.

For example, Frances took principal responsibility in preparing a comment letter to the Internal Revenue Service, protesting its "pre-certification" proposal for recipients of the Earned Income Tax Credit. This credit provides approximately \$89 million in refunds to the hard-working families of my district each year, and its benefit to my constituents cannot be overstated. Frances worked with both local and national community groups and advocates to help raise awareness of the IRS proposal, which would have imposed an onerous bureaucratic burden on EITC beneficiaries by requiring them to "register" for this credit in advance. Frances meticulously researched the details of the IRS plan and crafted a well-written and persuasive letter urging the IRS to reconsider the impact of its proposal. Her efforts have drawn not only attention from the media but the interest of community groups in Nashville, who are now working with our office to make free tax assistance more readily available in our community. I cannot thank her enough for what her work will do to help ensure that my constituents continue to receive the tax credits they have earned through their hard work.

In addition to this effort, Frances provided our office with valuable assistance and advice on issues as varied as diversity in media ownership, prescription drugs and Medicare and social security. She also worked on projects critical to local economic development and charity.

Both my staff and I will miss Frances deeply, and on behalf of my staff, I wish her the very best in all of her future endeavors. And to the APSA for granting us the opportunity to work with Frances, I again offer my sincerest thanks.

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HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION CONGRESSIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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**HON. ROBERT C. SCOTT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 22, 2003*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to draw attention to the 50th anniversary of the American Political Science Association (APSA) Congressional Fellowship Program.

The goal of the APSA Congressional Fellowship Program is simple: to help participants better understand Congress. It is the oldest such program on Capitol Hill, designed to place highly skilled professionals from a broad spectrum of backgrounds in congressional offices for nine months as legislative aides. Over

the years, the highly selective, nonpartisan program has grown from its beginnings with six fellows in 1953 to the current program, which selects between 40 and 45 professionals who have built impressive records of accomplishment as political scientists, journalists, sociologists, domestic and foreign policy government specialists, health policy experts and international scholars. The relationship between the fellow and the Members of Congress is a symbiotic one as Members obtain access to new sources of expertise, while fellows obtain first-hand perspectives about life on the Hill. There is, after all, no substitute for practical experience to understand Congress as a living institution. I wish to place on record my support for it.

I have had the privilege to be associated with two APSA fellows in my office during the time I have been serving in the House of Representatives. As it turns out both are female journalists from foreign countries. Fardah Assegaf from Indonesia worked at the National News Agency of Indonesia, and served in my office in 1993. Michelle Phipps-Evans from Trinidad and Tobago worked at the Washington Afro American Newspapers and is serving this year. Both have been invaluable in the levels of writing and researching they have brought to the table. Each acted as full members of my staff advising me on various issues.

Other enrichment opportunities continue through the program with the Wilson Seminar Series, which augment the legislative experience with speakers closely involved in the legislative process. A state-federal legislative comparative program at the State House in Annapolis, Maryland, and the Canadian Parliamentary Exchange provide further education. During the Canadian exchange, fellows provide their northern colleagues with a one-week orientation to Congress and receive a similar program through the House of Commons in Ottawa, Canada.

Upon completion of the year on Capitol Hill, which often includes experience in both the House and Senate, the fellows return to their previous employment where their understanding of the political process becomes integrated and disseminated, with a kind of ripple effect among their colleagues. This knowledge of the workings of government enhances their future participation in the democratic process.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the APSA Congressional Fellowship Program, which has given over 1,800 individuals what can only be called an "opportunity of a lifetime."

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CARICOM

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 22, 2003*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, last February, members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) met to discuss the prospect of creating a single Caribbean market economy. In mid-April, members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), a CARICOM subgroup, gathered to examine a similar proposal. Despite widespread enthusiasm among OECS members for economic integration, CARICOM participants Jamaica, Barbados, and other non-OECS members

have expressed their reservations. In response to strains caused by declining tourist revenue and highly competitive pricing in the tropical fruit sector, some of the smaller Eastern Caribbean islands are recognizing that their interests and the interests of other CARICOM members do not always fully coincide. The disagreements between OECS members and the remainder of the CARICOM states merit adequate attention on Washington's part if the final product of FTAA negotiations is to result in maximum economic benefits for our own citizens and for our neighbors to the South, including, of course, the English-speaking Caribbean.

As the economies of the region find themselves under increasing stress, and as diplomatic negotiations for the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas marches onward, it seems clearer than ever that careful attention must be paid to the delicate economic relationships presently maintained by each of the hemispheric nations, both small and large. If the world's economy is to recover from its present downturn, and if future economic slumps are to be averted, planners must recognize that support for total economic integration is far from universal. They must strive to understand the reasons behind dissent, where it exists, and the reasons for support, where it thrives. It may very well be that principles of free trade can be implemented more effectively in some places rather than in others, where local economic fundamentals do not entirely coincide with those of the main players, like the U.S.

The following research memorandum was authored by Justin Vance, a research associate with the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), a nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization that has long been committed to addressing issues associated with human rights, democracy and economic justice throughout the western hemisphere.

Fueled by a greater sense of urgency regarding the forging of a single market economy than some of their neighbors and fellow members in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the prime ministers of the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) met in mid-April 2003 to discuss the future of their economic relations. The seven permanent members of the OECS are Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Their governments have already passed EU-style measures that allow people to move freely across each other's borders. New passports for the Eastern Caribbean States are expected to be issued by 2004, while Antigua, St. Kitts, Montserrat, and St. Vincent have further accelerated their economic integration by also allowing the free movement of labor within the island group. The necessary planning to implement a single market economy would obviously take longer, but the group hopes to implement its integration by 2005. "This is only advancing by two years what is really going to take place," said St. Vincent Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves, possibly alluding to the fact that CARICOM is aiming for its own single market economy by 2007, only two years after its original date.

Most people tend to associate the Caribbean with stunning beaches and refreshing oceans. Some insist it is as close to paradise as one can find. Indeed, the Caribbean islands have plentiful resources and boast a soil structure that is perfect for growing a wide array of crops. Despite these riches,